

Soldiers
Online



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Fort Benning, Ga.

Rangers Adopt Tan Beret

ARMY Chief of Staff GEN Eric K. Shinseki has approved the 75th Ranger Regiment's request to exchange its black beret for a tan one. The change will maintain the distinctiveness of the unit and reflect the legacy of ranger history.

The rangers studied several options before deciding on the tan beret. The change was requested in a memorandum from regimental commander COL P.K. Keen to Shinseki.

"The black beret has served the rangers well and will be a symbol of excellence and unity for the Army," Keen said.

Shinseki announced last year that the Army would issue black berets to all soldiers. That change will take place June 14 — the Army's birthday.

Keen said adopting the tan beret for rangers is not about

being different from the rest of the Army, but about a critical aspect that unifies the Army — high standards.

"The decision to adopt the tan beret is based upon maintaining a distinctive beret for our rangers as the Army transitions to the black beret," Keen said.

Keen said the rangers support the Army's decision to don the black beret and view this as another step forward in the Army's overall transformation.

Tan is the one universal and unifying color common to all ranger operations, regimental officials said. It is reminiscent of the numerous beach assaults in the European Theater and the jungle fighting in the Pacific Theater of World War II.

Tan also represents the khaki uniforms worn by Korean and Vietnam War-era rangers, and is the color of the sand in Grenada, Panama, Iraq and Somalia, where modern-day rangers fought, died and led the way, they said.

Tan honors the legacy of all rangers, officials said, and exemplifies the skills and capabilities required of past, present and future rangers.

"Rangers have never been measured by what they have worn in peace or combat, but by commitment, dedication, physical and mental toughness, and willingness to lead the way — anywhere, anytime," Keen said. "The beret has become our most visible symbol — it will remain so."

"The ranger tan beret will

represent for the ranger of the 21st century what the black beret represented — a unit that 'Leads the Way' in our conventional and special-operations forces," Keen said. — *Army News Service*

Fort Lee, Va.

Army Honors Best Dining Facilities

SOLDIERS who staffed the best unit dining facilities and field

kitchens earned the 2001 Philip A. Connelly Awards, which were established in 1968 to recognize culinary excellence.

Awards were given based on five categories: small dining facilities (serving 200 or fewer people per meal), large dining facilities (serving 201 or more per meal), and active Army, National Guard and Army Reserve field kitchens.

Evaluators visited dining facilities and judged soldiers' efforts at more than 40 installa-

Technology

Innovative Land-mine Detector Unveiled

LAND-MINE detection should become easier and more accurate, thanks to a new handheld device.

The U.S. Army's Project Manager for Mines, Countermine and Demolitions, in conjunction with the Communication Electronics Command Acquisition Center, has announced the award of a \$12.3 million sole-source, fully-funded contract for the engineering and manufacturing development phase of CyTerra Corporation's Handheld Standoff Mine Detection System.

"Existing mine detectors are based on metal detection," said David H. Fine, president of CyTerra. "Our system integrates two sensor technologies — ground-penetrating radar and metal detection."

The new system dramatically reduces the high number of false alarms that have been a problem with current land-mine detection equipment. False-alarm rates are especially prevalent with the current systems when there are such other metal elements in the soil as shrapnel or bullet casings. The new device's rate of detection is unaffected by such "noise" during the detection process. The ground-penetrating radar, or GPR, also makes detecting plastic-cased mines possible and easier.

During testing at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., the CyTerra prototype demonstrated a probability of detection near 100 percent.

SFC Richard Sylvester, an Army engineer and NCO project manager, found this testing significant enough to earn his trust.

Sylvester said the new detector allows soldiers to be in the detecting mode longer, because the system of audio tones that alerts soldiers to the presence of a buried landmine is gentler to ears.

Soldiers should have the revamped detector by fiscal year 2004. — *ARNEWS*

tions in seven countries. Evaluations were based on such food operations as preparation, sanitation, administration, training and command-support training.

First- and second-place activities received a one-week training program at Johnson and Wales University in Denver, Colo., trophy bowls, plaques and certificates of achievement at various levels of competition.

The 2001 Philip A. Connelly winners were:

- Small Garrison: 701st Main Support Battalion, Kitzingen, Germany.

- Large Garrison: 95th Adjutant General Battalion, Fort Sill, Okla.

- Active Army Field Kitchen: 3rd Corps Support Command, 377th Transportation Company, Grafenwöhr, Germany.

- National Guard Field Kitchen: 712th Maintenance Company, Windsor Locks, Conn.

- Army Reserve Field

Kitchen: Headquarters and HQs. Company, 143rd Trans. Command, Orlando, Fla. — **ARNEWS**

Natick, Mass.

New Boots Keep Feet Warm, Dry

A REMOVABLE insulation liner and softer, more flexible midsole are two of the comfort features provided in the Army's improved intermediate cold/wet boot.

The first version of the boot was fielded in the early 1990s, filling the void between the standard-issue leather combat boots, which offer minimal performance in cold and damp conditions, and extreme cold weather vapor barrier boots, which lock out the cold and wet with their rubber-enclosed air chambers but don't breathe.

The insulation in the first version would lose its effectiveness if it became wet, said Chris Palmer, project officer for military footwear at the U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center-Natick.

The new version uses military-specification leather that's highly water-resistant and breathable, and has a removable liner that can be replaced if it becomes wet, allowing soldiers to continue wearing the same boot.

Instead of issuing two or three pairs of boots, they'll have two or three washable liners, Palmer said.

The boot tongue also is upgraded with breathable leather. A rugged, Vibram vulcanized rubber outer-sole stays with the improved model, but instead of

using rubber, the new boot is made with a softer polyurethane midsole.

"It's especially important when it's cold because the previous midsole materials stiffen," Palmer said. "The flexible forefoot should mean less rubbing and blisters at the heel. It doesn't change as much in cold weather, and it's easier to walk in, especially going uphill."

A study with recruits at Fort Jackson, S.C., using boots with the same outer sole and midsole construction showed a 30 percent reduction of lower extremity injuries. The boots were tested in Alaska and at the Mountain Warfare School in Vermont. Soldiers found them highly acceptable, with the boot staying much drier and warmer.

Both items will be available until the stock of the current intermediate cold/wet boots is depleted. — **USASSC-N PAO**



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Reserve Forces

Reserve Component Gets More Full-timers

WITH the planned addition of about 12,000 to the Army National Guard and 5,500 full-time support personnel to the Army Reserve over the next 10 years, reserve-component units should be better prepared to meet the challenges of the Army's high operational tempo, according to Army officials.

The 2001 National Defense Authorization Act began the full-time support increase of more Army Guard/Reserve soldiers and military technicians a year earlier than originally slated, said COL Bruce Wilson, a force development director with the Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations Office.

MG Thomas J. Plewes, chief of the Army Reserve, said the need for more AGRs and military technicians in the Reserve is due to the increased operational tempo of the Army over the past 10 years, which has placed heavy demands on the Reserve.

Military technicians work as Department of the Army civilians during the normal workweek and as Reservists during their units' drill weekends. AGRs work as soldiers both during the workweek and drills.

The full-time support manages such unit administrative details as pay processing, personnel records maintenance and supply actions, Wilson said. Work done by the AGRs and military technicians on a day-to-day basis allows Reservists more time for training and executing their units' missions rather than wading through piles of paperwork when they arrive for their monthly weekend duty, he said.

Manpower is directly tied to readiness, Wilson said, so those units most likely to be called upon to support Army operations in the short term will have priority to be manned with more full-time support than those who are tiered to be mobilized at later dates. For example, a transportation battalion slated to deploy overseas within 30 days of notification will more likely get more full-time support than a finance battalion scheduled to deploy 120 days after notification. — **ARNEWS**

Fort Sam Houston, Texas

Combat-Arms Earplugs Aid Hearing

"WHAT did you say? I couldn't hear you. I'm wearing earplugs." This wouldn't happen if you were actually wearing the new combat-arms earplugs.

The new device is a double-plug design. The yellow plugs of each set protect the wearer from such sudden impact noises as weapon fire, while the olive-drab plugs shield against such loud and steady noises as those made by aircraft, large trucks and lawn mowers.

With the yellow side of the plug properly inserted in the ear, the unit blends with a soldier's camouflage and permits normal-volume conversations, yet protects against the impact noise of one's own weapon.

The new earplug is available through normal supply channels. The national stock number is 6515-01-466-2710.

For more information on this device, contact Doug Ohlin

of the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine via e-mail to douglas.ohlin@amedd.army.mil. — *Academy of Health Sciences*

Washington, D.C.

ADS XXI Personnel Initiatives Move Forward

ARMY Chief of Staff GEN Eric K. Shinseki approved seven more Army Development System XXI Task Force recommendations bringing the total personnel initiatives to be implemented to 23.

Shinseki deferred approving one remaining personnel recommendation—to promote senior warrant officer applicants (sergeants first class and above) to chief warrant officer 2 upon graduating the Warrant Officer Basic Course—until more research on the subject is completed.

"Some of the task force recommendations are simple changes that enhance flexibility within the personnel management system, while others change outdated personnel pro-

cesses," said LTG Timothy J. Maude, deputy chief of staff for personnel. "This is all about doing what is necessary to posture ourselves for the objective force."

The approved Enlisted Personnel Management System initiatives are:

- Develop the multi-skilled soldier concept, which is a broader way of using soldiers and institutionalizing a competency-based (versus MOS-based) system.

- Combine military occupational specialties with similar functions.

- Quantify MOS qualification to link resources with documented proponent needs.

- Account for additional skill identifiers.

- Provide senior NCOs with experienced trainers/educators.

- Refine the Noncommissioned Officer Education System.

- Structure self-development into a program to complement NCOES.

- Review and publish professional development objectives.

- Implement Civilian Degree Builder Programs (formerly MOS Degree Builder Program) leading toward a college degree or technical certification for every MOS.

- Standardize MOS entry requirements.

Deployment News

U.S. Reduces Bosnia Force

THE Pentagon has announced that U.S. troop strength in Bosnia would drop from its previous level of 4,400 to 3,500 by the end of April. This number includes some overlap as units rotate in and out.

The cuts are the result of NATO's latest six-month force level review done in December. As a part of that process, U.S. defense officials informed NATO allies the United States would reduce excess equipment and personnel considered to be "above and beyond" its needs in carrying out its SFOR mission, said Pentagon spokesman Rear Adm. Craig Quigley.

The Department of Defense is reducing the number of tanks and fighting vehicles to a level officials feel is "still prudent to retain" in SFOR, Quigley added. "We tend not to be very definitive on specific types of systems that are in place so as to not completely show our hand," he told Pentagon reporters asking for specific numbers.

All of the Apache helicopters in Bosnia, about 16, are being withdrawn, Quigley said.

As the equipment flows out, he said, it will not be replaced. "So it's part of the overall rotation, but unlike past rotations, you're not replacing the force with a comparable level," he said.

About 20,000 U.S. troops entered Bosnia as part of NATO's effort to implement the 1995 Dayton Peace Accord and stabilize regional security. As conditions have warranted, the U.S. contingent has gradually drawn down its force, Quigley said. — *American Forces Press Service*



The new earplugs allow soldiers to hear conversations, while also protecting their hearing during weapon firing.

❑ Implement new Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery composites.

❑ Adopt a reasonably equitable active-component average grade distribution model.

The approved Warrant Officer Personnel Management System initiatives are:

❑ Roll back the active-component warrant officer grade structure.

❑ Assign active-component warrant officers to duty

positions by grade.

❑ Develop a warrant officer tenure program.

❑ Expand the technical warrant officer accession base.

❑ Access technical warrant officer applicants at five to eight years of active federal service.

❑ Educate officers and NCOs on the role of warrant officers.

❑ Tailor technical training to units and assignments.

VA News

VA Establishes Parkinson's Disease Centers

THE Department of Veterans Affairs is creating six new centers specializing in research, education and clinical care of Parkinson's disease, and is committing more than \$30 million to support the centers over the next four years.

"By establishing these specialized centers, we will enable top VA researchers, clinicians and educators to better understand Parkinson's disease, develop more effective treatments and clinical care strategies for patients, and improve education for caregivers," said Dr. Thomas L. Garthwaite, VA's undersecretary for health.

The centers will be established this year at VA medical facilities in Houston, Texas; Philadelphia, Pa; Portland, Ore.; Richmond, Va.; and San Francisco and West Los Angeles, Calif.

Each center will conduct research covering basic biomedicine, rehabilitation, health services delivery and clinical trials. They will also participate in a clinical trial to assess the effectiveness of surgical implantation of deep-brain stimulators in reducing the symptoms of Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's is a slowly progressive, debilitating disease characterized by tremors and movement or balance problems. VA medical centers treat at least 20,000 Parkinson's disease patients each year.

Creation of the new centers represents the second substantial VA initiative regarding Parkinson's disease in two years. In 1999, VA and the National Parkinson Foundation signed an agreement to establish the NPF-VA alliance to cure Parkinson's disease.

"This is a historic opportunity for VA and a continuation of VA's commitment to provide the best care for our veterans," Garthwaite said. "We are very optimistic that VA's support for this research, clinical care and education effort will result in significant progress. It provides additional hope for veterans and all Americans affected by Parkinson's disease." — VA PAO



National Archives

Though the National Memorial Day Concert honors all the nation's veterans, it highlights the World War II generation.

❑ Publish professional development policies and update other warrant officer policies.

❑ Provide specialty training to warrant officers in force development positions.

Two approved initiatives that impact both EPMS and WOPMS are: Accelerate the Military Occupational Classification Structure process and standardize MOS codes.

Initiative details can be found on the ADS XXI web site at www.army.mil/adsxxi/. — ARNEWS

Washington

Memorial Day Concert Airs on AFRTS, PBS

A MOVING tribute to the World War II generation and the 60th anniversary of Pearl Harbor, featuring journalist Walter

Cronkite, and a 10th anniversary salute to the veterans of Desert Storm will highlight PBS' National Memorial Day Concert this year.

Hosted by actor Ossie Davis, the holiday event is a blend of musical performance, dramatic readings and archival footage that will be broadcast live from the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol on Sunday, May 27, from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m. ET. The concert is broadcast overseas via the Armed Forces Radio and Television network.

The program will also include appearances by Travis Tritt, John Schneider, Charles Durning, Tom Wopat and other guests in performance with the National Symphony Orchestra. More information is available at www.pbs.org/memorialdayconcert. — Devillier Communications